



U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of Public Affairs
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590
<http://www.dot.gov/briefingroom>

BTS Data

BTS 25-14
Thursday, May 22, 2014
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March 2014 Passenger Airline Employment Data

Scheduled Passenger Airline Full-Time Equivalent Employees, Month of March, 1990-2014



U.S. scheduled passenger airlines employed 383,610 workers in March 2014, 0.8 percent more than in March 2013, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reported today. March was the fourth consecutive month that full-time equivalent (FTE) employment for U.S. scheduled passenger carriers was higher than the same month of the previous year (Tables 1, 2, 3).

The March 2014 FTE total for scheduled passenger carriers was 3,070 more than in March 2013 and the highest monthly total since October 2012 (Table 3). Scheduled passenger airline categories include network, low-cost, regional and other airlines. [Historical employment data](#) can be found on the BTS web site.

The five network airlines that collectively employ two-thirds of the scheduled passenger airline FTEs reported 0.6 percent more FTEs in March 2014 than in March 2013 (Table 7). US Airways, Alaska Airlines, Delta Air Lines and American Airlines increased FTEs from March 2013 while United Airlines reduced FTEs (Table 9). Network airlines operate a significant portion of their flights using at least one hub where connections are made for flights to down-line destinations or spoke cities.

Of the six low-cost carriers, four - Allegiant Airlines, Spirit Airlines, JetBlue Airways and Virgin America - reported an increase in FTEs from March 2013 while two - Frontier Airlines and Southwest Airlines - reported a decline (Table 12). Low-cost airlines operate under a low-cost business model, with infrastructure and aircraft operating costs below the overall industry average.

Among the 13 regional carriers, four carriers reported reduced employment levels in March compared to the previous year: Endeavor Airlines, Chautauqua Airlines, American Eagle Airlines and Shuttle America. The others reported increases (Table 15). Regional carriers typically provide service from small cities, using primarily regional jets to support the network carriers' hub and spoke systems.

Carrier Groups: The five network airlines employed 66.8 percent of the total number of FTEs employed by all scheduled passenger airlines in March, the six low-cost carriers employed 18.3 percent and the 13 regional carriers employed 13.2 percent (Table 4). The three airlines with the most FTEs in March - United, Delta and American - employed 56.1 percent of the month's total passenger airline FTEs (Tables 3, 6). These three airlines carried 40.1 percent of total passengers traveling on U.S. airlines in February, the most recent month available. See [Air Traffic press releases](#).

Top employers by group: United employed the most FTEs (80,694) in March among the network airlines, Southwest employed the most FTEs (45,163) among low-cost airlines, and American Eagle employed the most FTEs (10,865) among regional airlines. Four of the top five employers in the industry are network airlines (Table 6).

Airline Mergers: Airlines that announce mergers typically begin joint reporting following U.S. Department of Transportation approval and issuance of a single economic certificate. Southwest and AirTran Airways began joint reporting of their financial data, including employment numbers, in April 2012 under a waiver granted by the Department, while reporting the rest of their data as separate carriers. American and US Airways, following their December 2013 merger announcement, will report separately until the Department approves single carrier reporting and a single economic certificate is issued.

In March 2014 (for January 2014 data), the Department began displaying combined on-time performance data, mishandled baggage data, oversales data and complaint data in its [Air Travel Consumer Report](#) for Southwest and Air Tran as well as for American and U.S. Airways because both sets of airlines are sufficiently integrated that consumers perceive them as a single airline. The *Air Travel Consumer Report* also continues to display the separate performance of each of these airlines and will continue to do so until a single economic certificate is issued.

Network Airlines

Recent Changes: The network airlines employed 1,471 more FTEs in March 2014 than in March 2013, a 0.6 percent increase. Four of the five network carriers reported an FTE increase from March 2013 while United reported a decrease (Tables 8, 9).

Longer-term Changes: The network airlines employed 162 fewer FTEs in March 2014 than in March 2010, a 0.1 percent decrease. American (-9.6 percent) and Delta (-0.3) reported a decrease in FTE employment from 2010 to 2014 while US Airways (7.5 percent) and Alaska (4.7) reported increases. United's numbers for the two years are not directly comparable because of the intervening merger. United reported 4.9 percent more FTEs in March 2014 than United and Continental Airlines reported separately in March 2010 (Tables 8, 9).

Low-Cost Airlines

Recent Changes: The six low-cost airlines reported 0.8 percent more FTEs as a group from March 2013 to March 2014. Frontier and Southwest reported year-to-year decreases while the remaining four airlines reported increases (Table 12).

Longer-term Changes: The low-cost carriers employed 6,601 more FTEs in March 2014 than in March 2010, a 10.3 percent increase. Spirit reported the largest percentage increase, 76.3 percent, while Frontier was the only low-cost carrier to report a decline, 29.4 percent. March 2014 numbers for Southwest are not directly comparable to 2010 because of the intervening merger. Southwest reported 6.4 percent more FTEs in March 2014 than Southwest and AirTran reported separately in March 2010 (Table 12).

Regional Airlines

Recent Changes: Regional airlines reported a 1.0 percent increase in FTE employment in March 2014 compared to March 2013; one regional airline discontinued service since a year ago. Mesa Airlines and PSA Airlines reported the largest percentage increases in FTEs from March 2013 to March 2014. Endeavor and Chautauqua reported the largest percentage decreases (Table 15).

Longer-term Changes: The 13 regional carriers operating in March employed 1.7 percent fewer FTEs in 2014 than the 18 carriers operating in March 2010. Mesa reported the largest percentage decline followed by Horizon Air. GoJet Airlines reported the biggest four-year percentage gain. The ExpressJet/Atlantic Southeast combination reported 2.7 percent more FTE's in March 2014 than the two airlines reported separately in March 2010. The Endeavor/Mesaba combination reported 29.2 percent fewer FTE's in March 2014 than the two airlines reported separately in March 2010 (Table 15).

Endeavor operated as Pinnacle prior to August 2013.

Reporting Notes

Airlines that operate at least one aircraft that has more than 60 seats or the capacity to carry a payload of passengers, cargo and fuel weighing more than 18,000 pounds must report monthly employment statistics.

The “Other Carrier” category generally reflects those airlines that operate within specific niche markets such as the Hawaiian Islands served by Hawaiian Airlines and Island Air Hawaii.

Data are compiled from monthly reports filed with BTS by commercial air carriers as of May 14. Additional [airline employment data](#) and previous [press releases](#) can be found on the BTS website. BTS has [scheduled release](#) of April passenger airline employment data for June 19.

Table 1: Change from Previous Year in Scheduled Passenger Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Airline Group

Most recent 13 months - percent change compared to same month the previous year

Month	Network Airlines	Low-Cost Airlines	Regional Airlines	All Passenger Airlines**
Mar 2012-Mar 2013	-3.3	-0.1	-4.6	-2.6
Apr 2012-Apr 2013	-3.0	-0.3	-3.8	-2.4
May 2012-May 2013	-3.0	-0.3	-4.4	-2.4
Jun 2012-Jun 2013	-2.8	-0.6	-4.4	-2.4
Jul 2012-Jul 2013	-2.8	-0.4	-6.3	-2.6
Aug 2012-Aug 2013	-2.5	0.0	-5.1	-2.2
Sep 2012-Sep 2013	-2.1	-0.2	-3.0	-1.6
Oct 2012-Oct 2013	-1.4	-0.1	-0.8	-0.8
Nov 2012-Nov 2013	-0.4	-0.1	-0.5	-0.1
Dec 2012-Dec 2013	0.4	-0.6	-0.5	0.3
Jan 2013-Jan 2014	0.4	0.3	-0.4	0.5
Feb 2013-Feb 2014	0.1	0.7	0.5	0.4
Mar 2013-Mar 2014	0.6	0.8	1.0	0.8

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers. Other Carriers generally operate within specific niche markets. They are: Hawaiian Airlines, Sun Country Airlines and Island Air Hawaii.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Note: See Table 2 for all passenger airlines, Table 7 for Network, Table 10 for Low-Cost and Table 13 for Regional.

Table 2: Change from Previous Year in Scheduled Passenger Airline* Full-time Equivalent Employees**
Percent change compared to same month of the previous year

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014
January	0.4	2.1	-2.3	0.5
February	1.0	2.1	-2.4	0.4
March	1.5	2.1	-2.7	0.8
April	2.0	1.8	-2.4	
May	2.1	1.6	-2.5	
June	1.9	1.4	-2.4	
July	2.3	0.8	-2.6	
August	2.8	0.1	-2.2	
September	2.9	-0.6	-1.6	
October	3.0	-1.3	-0.8	
November	2.6	-2.0	-0.1	
December	2.7	-2.6	0.3	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers.

** Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 3: Scheduled Passenger Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month 2010-2014
FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Month	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percent Change	
						2010-2014	2013-2014
January	379.4	380.9	388.8	380.0	381.8	0.6	0.5
February	378.0	381.8	389.9	380.4	382.0	1.0	0.4
March	377.3	382.8	390.8	380.5	383.6	1.7	0.8
April	376.2	383.4	390.2	381.0			
May	377.0	385.0	391.0	381.4			
June	378.3	385.4	390.9	381.7			
July	378.1	386.8	391.3	381.3			
August	377.8	388.5	389.0	380.6			
September	377.7	388.6	386.4	380.2			
October	378.1	389.4	384.3	381.2			
November	379.3	389.4	381.6	381.2			
December	379.7	389.7	379.6	380.8			
12-Month Average	378.1	386.0	387.8	380.9			
Jan-Mar Average	378.2	381.9	389.8	380.3	382.5	1.1	0.6

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers.

** Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 4: Airline Group Full-time Equivalent Employees*, March 2010-2014
FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

	Network	Low-Cost	Regional	All Passenger Airlines**
2010	256.5	63.8	51.5	377.3
2011	260.5	65.3	52.5	382.8
2012	263.5	69.9	52.6	390.8
2013	254.9	69.9	50.2	380.3
2014	256.3	70.4	50.7	383.6
Pct. Change 2010-2014	-0.1%	10.3%	-1.7%	1.7%
Percent of Total Passenger Airline Employees in 2014	66.8%	18.3%	13.2%	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers.

Table 5: Year-to-Year Change in Airline Group Full-time Equivalent Employees*, March 2010-2014
Percent change in FTEs from the same month of the previous year

	Network	Low-Cost	Regional	All Passenger Airlines**
2010	-3.1	1.2	-10.1	-3.8
2011	1.5	2.3	1.8	1.5
2012	1.2	7.1	0.2	2.1
2013	-3.3	-0.1	-4.6	-2.7
2014	0.6	0.8	1.0	0.8

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers.

Table 6: Top 10 Airlines, March 2014

Ranked by Number of Full-Time Equivalent Employees*
FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Rank	Airline	Total FTE Employees	Carrier Group**	Top 10 Airlines March 2014
1	United	80.7	Network	United
2	Delta	74.5	Network	Delta
3	American	59.8	Network	American
4	Southwest	45.2	Low-Cost	Southwest
5	US Airways	31.7	Network	US Airways
6	JetBlue	13.5	Low-Cost	JetBlue
7	American Eagle	10.9	Regional	American Eagle
8	SkyWest	9.9	Regional	ExpressJet
9	Alaska	9.6	Network	SkyWest
10	ExpressJet	9.2	Regional	Alaska

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** See Table 9 for Network, Table 12 for Low-Cost and Table 15 for Regional.

Table 7: Network Airline Year-to-Year Change in Full-time Equivalent Employees* from the Previous Year

Percent change compared to same month of the previous year

	2011	2012	2013	2014
January	0.3	1.5	-3.1	0.4
February	1.1	1.2	-3.0	0.1
March	1.5	1.2	-3.3	0.6
April	1.8	1.3	-3.0	
May	2.1	1.3	-3.0	
June	1.6	1.4	-2.8	
July	2.1	0.8	-2.8	
August	2.7	-0.2	-2.5	
September	2.7	-0.8	-2.1	
October	2.7	-1.4	-1.4	
November	2.6	-2.4	-0.4	
December	2.3	-3.3	0.4	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Table 8: Network Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month 2010-2014
FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Month	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percent Change	
						2010-2014	2013-2014
January	257.8	258.7	262.6	254.4	255.5	-0.9	0.4
February	256.8	259.5	262.8	255.0	255.2	-0.6	0.1
March	256.5	260.5	263.5	254.9	256.3	-0.1	0.6
April	255.7	260.3	263.7	255.7			
May	255.5	260.8	264.2	256.3			
June	256.6	260.7	264.3	256.8			
July	256.4	261.8	263.8	256.5			
August	256.1	263.1	262.4	255.8			
September	255.8	262.6	260.6	255.2			
October	255.9	262.9	259.2	255.7			
November	256.4	263.1	256.8	255.9			
December	256.8	262.6	254.1	255.2			
12-Month Average	256.4	261.4	261.5	255.6			
Jan-Mar Average	257.0	259.6	262.9	254.7	255.7	-0.5	0.4

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 9: Network Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees*, March 2010-2014

(FTEs for March of each year. Ranked by March 2014 FTEs)

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Rank	Airline	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percent Change	
							2010-2014	2013-2014
1	UA/CO Combined	77.0	77.1	82.1	82.4	80.7	4.9	-2.1
	United**	43.7	43.6	82.1	82.4	80.7	N/A	-2.1
	Continental**	33.2	33.5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	Delta	74.7	78.5	76.5	73.4	74.5	-0.3	1.5
3	American	66.2	66.2	65.5	59.0	59.8	-9.6	1.4
4	US Airways	29.5	29.8	30.3	30.7	31.7	7.5	3.1
5	Alaska	9.2	8.9	9.0	9.4	9.6	4.7	2.7
	Total	256.5	260.5	263.5	254.9	256.3	-0.1	0.6

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee

** United Airlines and Continental Airlines merged and began reporting combined numbers in January 2012.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 10: Low-Cost Airline Year-to-Year Change in Full-time Equivalent Employees* from the Previous Year

Percent change compared to same month of the previous year

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014
January	2.2	5.7	1.1	0.3
February	2.3	6.4	0.2	0.7
March	2.3	7.1	-0.1	0.8
April	4.0	5.7	-0.3	
May	4.1	5.3	-0.3	
June	5.0	4.0	-0.6	
July	5.3	3.5	-0.4	
August	5.7	2.5	0.0	
September	5.9	2.5	-0.2	
October	6.2	1.9	-0.1	
November	5.9	1.4	-0.1	
December	6.6	1.3	-0.6	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 11: Low-Cost Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month 2010-2014

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

						Percent Change	
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010-2014	2013-2014
January	63.6	65.0	68.7	69.5	69.7	9.6	0.3
February	63.8	65.3	69.5	69.6	70.1	9.9	0.7
March	63.8	65.3	69.9	69.9	70.4	10.3	0.8
April	63.6	66.1	69.9	69.7			
May	63.9	66.6	70.1	69.8			
June	64.0	67.3	70.0	69.6			
July	64.0	67.4	69.8	69.5			
August	64.0	67.7	69.4	69.4			
September	64.1	67.9	69.6	69.4			
October	64.3	68.3	69.6	69.5			
November	64.7	68.5	69.4	69.4			
December	64.7	68.9	69.8	69.4			
12-Month Average	64.0	67.0	69.6	69.5			
Jan-Mar Average	63.7	65.2	69.3	69.6	70.1	9.9	0.6

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: Percent changes and averages based on numbers prior to rounding.

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Table 12: Low-Cost Carrier Full-time Equivalent Employees,* March 2010-2014**

(FTEs for March of each year. Ranked by March 2014 FTEs)

							Percent Change	
Rank		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010-2014	2013-2014
1	WN/FL Combined	42,439	43,230	46,116	45,791	45,163	6.4	-1.4
	Southwest**	34,637	35,259	38,833	45,791	45,163	N/A	-1.4
	AirTran	7,802	7,971	7,283	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	JetBlue	11,234	11,571	12,521	12,775	13,513	20.3	5.8
3	Spirit	2,024	2,139	2,770	3,215	3,569	76.3	11.0
4	Frontier	4,966	4,902	4,426	3,808	3,504	-29.4	-8.0
5	Virgin America	1,525	1,823	2,359	2,386	2,505	64.3	5.0
6	Allegiant	1,597	1,609	1,695	1,879	2,130	33.4	13.4
	Total	63,783	65,273	69,886	69,853	70,384	10.3	0.8

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** Southwest Airlines and AirTran Airways merged and began reporting combined numbers in April 2012.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 13: Regional Airline Year-to-Year Change in Full-time Equivalent Employees* from the Previous Year

Percent change compared to same month of the previous year

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014
January	0.4	0.1	-4.1	-0.4
February	0.9	0.8	-5.0	0.5
March	1.8	0.2	-4.6	1.0
April	2.1	-1.5	-3.8	
May	1.6	-2.2	-4.4	
June	1.5	-2.5	-4.4	
July	1.9	-3.3	-6.3	
August	2.1	-2.3	-5.1	
September	2.0	-4.3	-3.0	
October	2.1	-6.0	-0.8	
November	0.6	-5.4	-0.5	
December	1.5	-5.4	-0.5	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 14: Regional Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month 2010-2014

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percent Change	
						2010-2014	2013-2014
January	52.5	52.8	52.8	50.6	50.4	-4.0	-0.4
February	52.0	52.4	52.8	50.2	50.5	-2.9	0.5
March	51.5	52.5	52.6	50.2	50.7	-1.7	1.0
April	51.5	52.6	51.8	49.9			
May	52.1	52.9	51.7	49.5			
June	52.2	53.0	51.7	49.4			
July	52.2	53.2	52.7	49.4			
August	52.2	53.3	52.1	49.4			
September	52.3	53.4	51.1	49.5			
October	52.4	53.5	50.3	49.9			
November	52.7	53.0	50.1	49.9			
December	52.5	53.3	50.4	50.2			
12-Month Average	52.2	53.0	51.7	49.8			
Jan-Mar Average	52.0	52.5	52.7	50.3	50.5	-2.9	0.4

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 15: Regional Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees*, March 2010-2014
(FTEs for March of each year. Ranked by March 2014 FTEs)

Rank		Percent Change						
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010-2014	2013-2014
1	American Eagle	9,045	9,663	9,906	11,244	10,865	20.1	-3.4
2	SkyWest	8,989	9,139	9,372	9,414	9,912	10.3	5.3
3	XE/EV Combined	8,981	8,885	9,430	8,848	9,223	2.7	4.2
	ExpressJet**	5,435	5,187	9,430	8,848	9,223	N/A	4.2
	Atlantic Southeast**	3,546	3,698	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
4	9E/XJ Combined	5,494	5,634	5,061	4,432	3,892	-29.2	-12.2
	Endeavor***	3,289	3,479	5,061	4,432	3,892	N/A	-12.2
	Mesaba***	2,205	2,155	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
5	Horizon	3,028	2,875	2,792	2,650	2,810	-7.2	6.0
6	Republic	1,974	2,195	1,984	2,273	2,767	40.2	21.7
7	Air Wisconsin	2,518	2,575	2,608	2,543	2,567	1.9	0.9
8	Shuttle America	1,289	1,341	1,794	2,040	2,003	55.4	-1.8
9	Mesa	2,199	1,979	1,751	1,545	1,912	-13.1	23.8
10	PSA	965	997	1,058	1,067	1,311	35.9	22.9
11	Compass	966	899	1,071	1,090	1,200	24.2	10.1
12	GoJet	541	588	831	1,086	1,119	106.8	3.0
13	Chautauqua#	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,212	1,077	N/A	-11.1
14	Executive##	1,333	1,884	1,588	737	N/A	N/A	N/A
15	Colgan###	1,275	1,522	1,655	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
16	Comair####	2,551	2,264	1,683	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
17	Lynx#####	379	30	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	51,522	52,468	52,581	50,181	50,658	-1.7	1.0

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** ExpressJet Airlines and Atlantic Southeast Airlines began reporting combined numbers in January 2012.

*** Endeavor Airlines operated as Pinnacle prior to August 2013. Pinnacle Airlines and Mesaba Airlines began reporting combined numbers in January 2012.

Effective July 2012 Chautauqua Airlines began reporting employment data.

Effective the end of March 2013, Executive Airlines ceased operations.

Effective the end of September 2012, Colgan Airlines ceased operations.

Effective the end of October 2012, Comair ceased operations.

Effective the end of March 2011, Lynx Airlines ceased operations.

N/A: Carriers did not meet the standard for filing, was no longer operating, merged with another operating carrier or failed to file. See previous notes.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.